



CONCORD BOARD OF HEALTH

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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

PRESS RELEASE

To: Local Media

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Date: May 2, 2014

For Immediate Release

Free Tick Testing for Concord Residents

Lyme disease is the most common infectious disease in Concord, and several other tick-borne diseases, Babesiosis and Anaplasmosis, are increasingly being reported in our area.

The Concord Health Division is offering tick testing at no cost to residents—residents who are bitten by a tick may submit it for FREE testing during 2014 to determine if it is carrying pathogens that cause Lyme Disease, Babesiosis, and Human Granulocytic Anaplasmosis (HGA). Tick testing will be performed by the Laboratory of Medical Zoology (LMZ) at the University of Massachusetts.

Residents who find a tick attached should carefully remove it using tweezers and place the tick (alive or dead) in a sealable plastic bag. Submitting a sample is easy: go to www.TickReport.com, complete a testing submittal form and receive a sample number, place the tick with sample number in an envelope and mail it to the LMZ address indicated on the form. Residents will receive results by email within 5 business days; these results can be shared with physician to help guide treatment decisions.

The findings of the testing are maintained anonymously and will help local and state agencies build a surveillance database to better inform public health disease prevention programs and track tick-borne disease.

The cost for tick testing outside this program can be upwards of \$140, so the Health Division is pleased to be able to offer this service to Concord residents for no cost for the coming year. Once the LMZ has analyzed 100 ticks from Concord, a discounted testing rate of \$50 will be offered. The program is funded through a 2014 Governor's Community Innovation Challenge Grant awarded to 32 towns in Massachusetts, including Concord.

For more information, please visit the Concord Health Division's webpage at:
http://www.concordma.gov/pages/ConcordMA_health/Tickborne%20Diseases or call 978 318 3275.

Residents are also encouraged to take the Middlesex Tick Task Force's Tick-borne Illness Survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/MiddlesexTickSurvey> to assess their knowledge about tick-borne diseases.